

Message Text

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40

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 L-03 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 PC-01

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R 091102Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8120

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 0216

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, DM

SUBJ: PRES KEREKOU DECLARES NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL'S
SENTENCES WILL BE CARRIED OUT

REF COTONOU 181,

1. IN PARAKOU SPEECH FEB 7 PRES KEREKOU SAID "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES" WERE SPREADING STORIES THAT THE SENTENCES HANDED DOWN BY THE "NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL" FEB FIRST (SEE REFTEL) AGAINST THE ALLEGED PLOTTERS WOULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT. HE ASSERTED THAT SENTENCES WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO THE LETTER. HE ALSO REMINDED HIS LISTENERS THAT HE HAD NOT PARDONED THOSE CONVICTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE COUP ATTEMPT OF JAN 1975 (I.E. ASSOGBA ET AL).

2. COMMENT: IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT ELIE HOUKPONNOU, THE ONLY ONE OF THE ELEVEN SENTENCED TO DEATH FEB FIRST IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BENIN GOVT'S HANDS, WILL ESCAPE EXECUTION. UNLIKE THE THREE IN DEATH ROW SINCE MARCH 75 (CAPT ASSOGBA, FATHER QUENUM AND ADRIEN GLELE), HOUKPONNOU IS NOT A WELL KNOWN PERSONALITY WITH THE SYMPATHY OF AT LEAST PART OF THE POPULATION BEHIND HIM. HE IS ONLY A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN POLICE OFFICER. ALTHOUGH POLICE CONTROLS HAVE BECOME VERY TIGHT, AND KEREKOU AND THE EXTREMISTS PRESENTLY APPEAR VERY CONFIDENT THAT THEY HAVE THE POPULATION FIRMLY IN HAND, WE REMAIN
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SKEPTICAL THAT ASSOGBA, QUENUM AND GLELE WILL BE EXECUTED.

ENGLE

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Message Attributes

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